

Summary of CalWORKs Changes Fiscal Year 2012 – 2013

Extended and Phased Out Short-Term Exemptions

The 2012-13 budget extended the work participation short-term exemptions (a child from 12 to 24 months of age, or multiple children under six years of age) and the associated funding reduction through December 2012 and required counties to gradually bring exempt populations back into work participation. This process, referred to informally as “reengagement,” is to take place over 24 months and conclude by January 2015.

New One-Time Work Exemption

The 2012-13 budget also created a new, permanent exemption for work-eligible adults with a child two years old or younger. Unlike the short-term exemptions, this new exemption may be used only once in an adult participant's lifetime.

Reduced Hourly Participation Requirements

Prior to January 2013, the hourly work participation requirement was 32 hours for single-parent families and 35 hours for two-parent families. The 2012-13 budget lowered the minimum hourly requirement for single-parent families to 20 hours for households with a child under six years of age and 30 hours for two parent families. These total hourly requirements now conform to federal hourly requirements (but with no core/non-core distinction).

New Time Limit on Adult Participation under State Work Rules Introduced

Beginning January 2013, work-eligible adults are prospectively limited to 24 months of cumulative eligibility under state work rules. Once the 24 months have been exhausted, adults will be required to participate under federal work rules. This includes a minimum hourly participation in federally designated core activities. Families that fail to comply with federal work rules will have their grant reduced by the adult portion. Months counting toward the 24-month limit do not need to be consecutive, and months in which federal work requirements are met or the recipient is exempt or sanctioned are not counted against the limit.

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Restoration of Cal-Learn

The Cal-Learn program provides intensive case management to CalWORKs teen parents who remain in school. Depending on a teen parent's academic performance, bonuses can be earned or sanctions (a decreased CalWORKs grant) may result. The case management component of Cal-Learn was suspended during 2011-12. The 2012-13 budget restored the case management component of the Cal-Learn Program.

Implementation of Annual Income Reporting for Child-Only Cases

Prior to the 2012-13 budget, CalWORKs eligibility for all families was reviewed every three months, using a quarterly eligibility/ income report (QR 7). Beginning October 2012, for certain "child-only" families with no eligible adult, CalWORKs eligibility is reviewed only **once a year** at annual redetermination.